

DETAILED ACTION

1. After reviewing the application and prior art and a detail thorough search, the examiner found out that the arguments made by the applicant's representative during the interview, conducted on 6 October 2009, is persuasive. Therefore, the examiner decided to withdraw the rejection of claims 1-3, 7-10 and 43-56.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The applicant's invention has a feature that is distinct comparing with prior art cited by the examiner. The claims recite "calculating a transformation of the master dust map to generate a manifestation of the master dust map that includes information describing dust location and appearance as a function of one or more optical parameters including exit pupil dimension of the lens assembly or distance of dust from a surface of the electronic sensor array that corresponds to a focal plane of the lens assembly, or both" and "analyzing pixels within one or more further acquired digital images and updating the master dust map or the manifestation of said master dust map, or both, in accordance with the analyzing," which are distinguishable features.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

3. Claims 1-3, 7-10 and 43-56 are allowed.
4. The prior art made of record is considered pertinent to the disclosure of the application:
 - Kitawaki et al. (US 2002/0093577 A1): An all-white reference subject is imaged by a CCD and image data representing the reference subject is obtained. The position of any dust on the reference subject represented by the reference-subject image data is detected by a dust position detector. Address data representing the position of the dust is stored in a memory that stores dust address data. When the user images a subject, image data obtained by such imaging is input to a dust correction circuit. The dust address data is read from the memory and the image at the position represented by this dust address data is eliminated from the image of the subject by reason of the fact that the image at this position is that of dust.
 - Anderson (US 6,002,436): The present invention provides a system and method for timelapse capture in an image capture unit. A system and method for timelapse capture according to the present invention comprises capturing a first image automatically; initiating a sleep mode after capturing the first image; and transitioning from the sleep mode into a wake mode prior to capturing a second image. According to the present invention, a system and method is provided which provides a digital camera with the ability to automatically place the digital

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camera in a sleep mode during the interval when the camera is inactive. The sleep mode minimizes power consumption during inactive periods of a timelapse capture sequence, thus allowing automation of timelapse sequences. The sleep mode can be initiated if a predetermined time interval is greater than a setup time required prior to initiating the next image capture. The predetermined time interval can be an interval such as a time interval which starts after the end of the processing time required for a first capture and continuing until the second image capture.

- Robins et al. (WO 03/019473): The object of the invention is to provide a system and method for identifying and correcting defects in a digital image in which the system and method do not require additional components and adjusting the pixels surrounding the defective pixels.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOHN Wahnkyo LEE whose telephone number is (571)272-9554. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (Alt.) 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samir Ahmed can be reached on (571) 272-7413. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status

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information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/CHARLES KIM/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2624

/John Wahnkyo Lee/
Examiner, Art Unit 2624